

TWI Media House

TWI annually produces and distributes over 6,000 hours of original programming to more than 200 territories. It negotiates television rights and distributes programming for many prominent and diverse sports organisations. Clients include Major League Baseball, the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club (Wimbledon), the Indy 500, the Rugby World Cup, the PGA of America, the NCAA, and the International Ski Federation.

The Challenge

When TWI relocated their facilities to the new mediahouse site in west London, the company wanted a desktop controlled system to provide a unified interface for all their MCR requirements.

TWI had been monitoring this sector of the market for some years and chose the Pharos Pilot MCR system to control its routers and a wide range of ancillary equipment including synchronisers, aspect ratio converters, SDI audio shufflers and general interfaces, line-identifiers, satellite dish positioners and receivers.

The Solution

The Pilot MCR electronics are housed in the central apparatus room and take the form of a server network that communicates through various Pharos Control Platforms (PCPs) with the routing matrices and other external hardware. With Pilot, the MCR operators are faced with simple and efficient software-based control via touchscreen. TWI's main router is 256 square and the company also has a 128 square SDI matrix for VTR and a 64 square for gallery operation. An additional 32 square matrix is used for the edit suites. Configuring and driving all of the hardware panels needed to control these would be something of a nightmare.

With Pilot, one operator can control all these routers and more just by sitting in front of one computer workstation. Hardware panels were retained in the desks as backup should the Pharos system ever fail but they have not been used since Pilot was installed. TWI has a main and backup Pilot system and, with the hardware panels, effectively have three levels of redundancy.

Pharos Pilot Control in action at TWI



Business Benefits of Pilot for TWI

- Freedom to source third-party equipment
- Assignable control
- Improved engineering-staff efficiency
- Flexible resource allocation
- Reduced training overhead
- High technical reliability

Richard Allingham - Chief Engineer TWI

“With Pharos Pilot, one MCR operator can control all our routers and modular equipment from a single desktop workstation. Pilot enables us to use a common interface that is easily expandable as we develop our business operations.”

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Why Pharos?

A key benefit of Pharos Pilot MCR is that it allows TWI to configure their own Graphical User Interface (GUI) control panels as the company modifies the hardware structure within the Mediahouse facility.

The Pharos system delivers the extra benefit of not being locked into any one router supplier and Pilot enables TWI to use a common interface that is easily expandable as the company develops its business operations. The MCR is configured as three identical monitoring sections plus two VTRs for playout. Each monitoring section has a Pharos Pilot touchscreen workstation augmented by assignable rotary control panels allowing fast adjustment of signal level. Each section also has a Pharos Almanac workstation linked into the booking system for playout and recording of satellite feeds and so on. TWI has two Pilot workstations in VTR for routing control.

TWI is also installing small Pharos applications on PCs across the mediahouse office network that allow people to control parts of the routing matrix relevant to their area.

Key Functionality of Pilot for TWI

- Single-operator control of the entire routing system
- Common user interface for 24/7 operations
- Simple touchscreen operation
- Multiple levels of system redundancy
- Staff can create their own GUI panels as new needs arise
- Pharos Pilot can accommodate future 3rd party equipment
- More flexible working
- Remote diagnostics

This case study

PHCS 2002 TWI Pilot

Related information:

PHDS-2004 Pilot MCR

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